

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KABUL 03372 301519Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SY-05
OPR-02 OC-06 AID-05 MCT-01 PC-01 ACDA-12 /106 W
-----120936 301526Z /45

Z O 301430Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 7689
SECDEF FLASH
DIRNSA FT MEADE MD FLASH
CINCPAC FLASH
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KABUL 3372

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

ISLAMABAD, NEW DELHI, AND TEHRAN: ALSO FOR USDAO

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT, AF
SUBJECT: AFGHAN COMMUNIST LEADER BECOMES RULER OF AFGHANISTAN

1. ON APRIL 30, RADIO AFGHANISTAN ANNOUNCED AT 1700 LOCAL TIME THAT PRO-SOVIET COMMUNIST KHALQ PARTY LEADER NUR MOHAMMAD TARAKI HAS BEEN NAMED PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA) AND PRIME MINISTER (THE SAME INFORMATION WAS CONVEYED OFFICIALLY TO THE EMBASSY AT 1825 IN A CIRCULAR NOTICE, DELIVERED BY A MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT). AS THE TOP AFGHAN COMMUNIST BECOMES HEAD OF STATE AND CHIEF OF SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 03372 301519Z

GOVERNMENT, THE TRUE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE COUP LEADERSHIP IS NOW NAKEDLY APPARENT TO ALL.

2. TARAKI, WHO WAS BORN ON JULY 15, 1917, IN MAIMANA PROVINCE IN NORTHWESTERN AFGHANISTAN, IS A PUSHTUN. HE HAS BEEN A PROMINENT COMMUNIST LEADER SINCE 1965. AMONG THE SIGNIFICANT POSITIONS HE HAS HELD ARE: DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF PUBLICATIONS

IN THE MINISTRY OF PRESS AND INFORMATION (1950-51); EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE OFFICIAL BAKHTAR NEWS AGENCY (1951-52); PRESS ATTACHE AT THE AFGHAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON (1952-53); TRANSLATOR/INTERPRETER FOR THE ICA USOM/A MISSION AT KABUL (CA. 1958); TRANSLATOR FOR THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AT KABUL (1962-63); BECAME GENERAL-SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (CA. MAY 1965); EDITOR OF "KHALQ" ("MASSES"), THE FAR-LEFTIST NEWSPAPER (APRIL-MAY 1966); GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE TARAKI GROUP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (APRIL 1967); CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE UNIFIED KHALQ-PARCHAMIST PARTY (JUNE 1977).

3. TARAKI WAS MARRIED IN 1942, BUT HAS NO CHILDREN. HE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS "A SHAVEN-HEADED, BULKY MAN OF ALMOST COMMANDING UGLINESS." HE VISITED THE SOVIET UNION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT IN 1965 OR 1966, TRAVELLING EXTENSIVELY IN THE USSR DURING HIS 42-DAY SOJOURN. TARAKI SPEAKS DARI AND ENGLISH, IN ADDITION TO HIS NATIVE PUSHTUN. FULLER BIOGRAPHIC DETAILS WILL BE REPORTED LATER.

4. UPON ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENT OF TARAKI, THE RADIO VOICE OF THE NEW DRA HAS PROCLAIMED THAT TOMORROW, MAY DAY, WILL BE A NATIONAL HOLIDAY. EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE NOTED THE APPEARANCE OF SOME RED FLAGS THROUGHOUT KABUL THIS AFTERNOON.

5. COMMENT: MANY AFGHAN AND FOREIGN OBSERVERS AT KABUL WERE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 03372 301519Z

SURPRISED THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TAKEN OVER COMPLETE POWER OPENLY, DISCARDING SO EARLY IN THE GAME THEIR INITIAL VEIL OF "ISLAMIC NATIONALISM". THIS COULD REPRESENT A SERIOUS MISCALCULATION ON THEIR PART HOWEVER. THE DEVOUT TRADITIONALIST MAJORITY OF THIS SOCIETY HARDLY SEEMS READY TO ACCEPT THE LEADERSHIP OF WHAT IS, RELATIVELY SPEAKING, A MINUSCULE COMMUNIST ELITE. THIS REACTION COULD ALSO INCLUDE THOSE ELEMENTS OF THE REBELLING ARMED FORCES WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR BROADER NATIONALIST AND PROGRESSIVE GOALS. ADDITIONALLY, THE REGIONAL SECURITY IMPLICATIONS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CLEAR TO THE IRANIAN AND PAKISTANI GOVERNMENTS. WITH REFERENCE TO THE LATTER, WE NOTE THAT THE LONG COLLABORATION BETWEEN AFGHAN COMMUNIST LEADERS AND PUSHTUNISTAN NATIONALISTS APPEARS TO BE CONTINUING INTO THE COUP ERA. THE RED, BLACK, AND WHITE FLAG OF PUSHTUNISTAN STILL WAVES TODAY OVER PUSHTUNISTAN SQUAARE IN DOWNTOWN KABUL. DURING COMING DAYS WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE A MORE THOROUGH ANALYSIS OF THESE EVENTS AS WE SEE THE NEW COMMUNIST REGIME BECOME ESTABLISHED. THE DISCIPLINE WE SAW DISPLAYED DURING THE ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATION BEFORE OUR EMBASSY ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO, ON APRIL 19, HAS ALREADY TRANSLATED ITSELF INTO POLITICAL POWER. WE SHALL BE INTERESTED TO SEE WHAT THE FIRST RED MAY DAY IN AFGHANISTAN WILL

LOOK LIKE TOMORROW.
ELIOT

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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